

**The meanings of Visual Art Education on Emotional,  
Cognitive and Social Developments of Pupils**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The aim of this study was to study meanings of visual art education on emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils. The goal was also to discover the different dimensions of these developmental factors in relation with art education. For describing these meanings, the method of open – ended interview was done, through which data from 5 number of teacher training students and 2 art teachers was gathered. Data was analysed by conventional content analysis method in section of results, and for assessing the accountability of findings, they have been compared with the reference data of section two, in the final section of discussion.

According to the main findings of this study, the added value of visual art education is that it can improve pupils' emotional, cognitive and social development, while there are divers number of themes in meanings of pupils' learning, related to each developmental aspect. This study aims to create ideas for future studies of visual art education regarding the neoliberal policies dominant in educational settings, particularly in developing countries, considering the political and social problems there.

**Keywords:** Visual Art Education, Pupils, Emotional Development, Cognitive Development, Social Development.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Apart from justifying my research topic, during the long time of my interest to art education, in my most private and honest dialogues with myself, I have always asked the question that, is really visual art education as important as other school subjects are? Is it really meaningful regarding development of pupils?

Considering my background as a middle - eastern, it becomes a more critical question. It is a region in which numerous and highly interrelated social, economic, political and recently environmental problems, making everyday life and even the meaning of human existence something agonizing. This reality, make the whole concept of art to look a little too luxury at first glance. What that look in the first glance of a middle - eastern is that subjects like science, law and politics has the more influential role for supporting such countries to solve the economic and political problems.

Accordingly, despite my intrinsic and intense enthusiasm for arts, I needed to convince the concerns of a mind that have background in a culture with most basic deficiencies. Not to ignore that, the cultural background of mine associate the very rich combination of traditional arts, simultaneously.

The reference data gathered for this study are not limited to any specific context, rather they are international point of views regarding visual art education. However, considering the fact that I did my studies in Finland, that is fortunately one of the bests in education, I decided to focus the context of study in Finland, and gather my data based on point of views of Finnish participants about visual art education in Finnish primary schools. Hoping that the findings based on Finnish context will be applicable in later studies regarding the broader contexts, or the context that my background is in.

Consequently, this study is done according to the point of view of 5 number of teacher training students of university of Jyväskylä and 2 art teachers of this city, about visual art education in Finland.

The aim of this study has been to describe the meanings of visual art education on emotional, cognitive and social developments of pupils.

## **2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS IN RELATION WITH VISUAL ART EDUCATION**

The focus of this study is on the meanings that visual art education can have in relation with different aspects of pupils' development. In this chapter, exploring the reference data, first the visual art education itself is described. In the next sections reference data is used to describe different aspects of development, in relation with different educational perspectives and visual art education.

Each aspect of development is also categorized in different themes, there were found in reference data.

### **2.1 Visual Art Education**

An important part of the concept visual art education is the dominant discourses on it. To start from the very basics, McArdle & Piscitelli (2002), discuss that based on popular believes proper visual art education only needs to have range of interesting materials, nice atmosphere, as well as lovely teacher who cares for pupils to have fun. However, many visual art teachers with more progressive perspectives claim that they do not teach visual arts to pupils, pupils themselves know how to do it, during exploration, experimentation and self - expression.

Nevertheless, through close observation it is been revealed that pupils are provide with so much guidance, modeling and techniques. Yet, through the most progressive approaches methods in visual art education are seen as different with styles of education in other subjects. There exist much looser teaching disciplines, and the idea of comparative freedom from discipline is an central approach. While it is accepted as right of children to learn math, science and language based on the specific standards, it turns to freedom from disciplines when it come to visual art literacy (McArdle & Piscitelli 2002).

Another aspect of the issue, more related to this study is about meanings of visual art education on different aspects of pupils being. Here are briefly about the more dominant point of views in this regard.

Eisner (1991), hint on the diversity of different forms of visual arts and the different forms of experiencing and expressing the life that they provide. He believes that it is a great lesson to take from the diversity of ways in which knowledge about the world can be found and expressed. He use example of different painting styles of the history like impressionism, cubism, minimalism, realism or so on, that by being introduced to and working on, pupils can experience plurality of the aspects of the world and the ways in which it can be understood and described as well as different aspects of their own being. He claims that taking into account such a perspective, accepting the epistemological pluralism, will influence the educational designing profoundly. He also indicates that having the experience of working arts give the performer this awareness that there are always possibilities that have not been conceptualized before (Eisner, 1991).

The flexibility of the teaching method is the other thing that a teacher may learn from an artistic work. Theoretical models of teaching science are too abstract and the researches done in this field could have not consider all various situation in which they might be implemented. Therefor, for applying them in different situation of teaching to very different kinds of pupils, the flexibility and ability to cope with the unpredictable features of the specific context of teaching is necessary (Eisner, 1991).

It is also increasingly agreed that education should be seen with needs for artistic considerations, compared to what it was seen in the past (Kagan, 1989).

## **2.2 Emotional Development**

### **2.2.1 Empowerment of children**

Within different approaches on children's learning process, the term of constructivism represents all different attempts that allocate more agency to the children and are in contrary with the ones that put the whole control of process in teacher's

hands and do not consider the constructive role of the learner (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1991).

In the Vygotsky theory of *zone of proximal development*, a level of agency is considered for children due to importance of their function, but still, the adults have the superior position in facilitating the *emergence* of knowledge in this social interaction (Newman, Griffin, & Cole, 1989).

Bronfenbrenner's (1977), ecological model, through which he hints on the necessity of interaction between children and their social environment, indication on significance of reciprocal relation in social relations as learning environment by Bandura (1989), the concept of active child introduced by De Vries (1997), all shed light on different aspects of agentic role of children in their learning process.

By people like Diaz (1990), a shift happens towards seeing more power in children's side. He discuss that within the zone of proximal development, children gradually take the control of regulation, and it is how they master the self-regulation. They learn to do themselves, what the adult used to do for them.

Devine (2002), claims that the true learning cannot occur unless children actively and agentively cooperate for carrying it out. For such goal to reach, this chances should be given to pupils to influence the process, and the teacher - pupil relation should be more possible to negotiate (Devine 2002).

Olsson (2009), working from a Swedish university base, with different pre-school teachers, researches the contribution of Deleuze and Guattari perspectives in education. In her research, she search for approaches and methods that promote the vitality of learning process and focus on capacities of children as *overabundant and extravagant force* states in their process of becoming, that shift the attention on process, rather than result. Therefore, there is need to see how the learning process goes on and how children should be empowered to be able to continue it. This way, all different capacities and interests of children that facilitate this process, including artworks, play, environmental elements, smells, lights, children's different shapes of free interactions and different emergences of their agency, should be seen, given attention and applied.



### **2.2.2 Freedom**

Rolling (2016), narrates about the experience of STEAM in an American school through which pupils, created three dimensional hand - made topographic maps of earth's surface, in creative way and with artistic freedom, after they had recently learnt about this concept in their science courses. He explains that for doing so pupils used very different artistic constructive methods for making the different kind of topographic maps that about their scientific characteristics they have learnt. However, pupils had freedom to be creative as much as desired, so that their works comprised a spectrum from the accurately made based on scientific facts, to the very artistic imaginary ones. Rennie et al. (2003), discuss that in these kind of learning activities, freedom of pupils about and their control over the matter and method of learning play an important role. The freedom cause the learner to be emotionally more connected and obligated to the learning subject and its goal.

### **2.2.3 Autonomy**

King (1992), summarize from most recent studies of her time about education that, for learning and memorizing new materials the optimum happens when the pupil has an extent of contribution to that material. This contribution can be in different manners among which she mentions: adding more data to the material, speaking about personal understanding of the discussion or the relation of its different parts, visualizing some parts of the concepts, connecting the discussions with some other concepts that the pupil previously knew or experienced. When pupil him/herself choose the contribution that want to make in learning, it will be related to what is already meaningful for him/her, and has more motivation to do. Accordingly, this personally chosen contribution is more likely to be remembered later.

Zander (1998), discussing about visual art courses claims that, teachers with less understanding about visual arts put more comments on pupils works, com-

pared to their colleagues with deeper understanding on this discipline, and pupils who learn and work based on their inner motivations care less about too many comments of these teachers.

Wilson & Wilson (1981), explained about their experience, called 'graphic dialogue', during their research in visual art classrooms. For implementing this method teachers gave the chance to the pupils to direct the dialogue with adults about their works of art. Children became very excited about this position and took part in the dialogue with great motivation.

In similar study, Thompson & Bales (1991) discuss that how having different kind of speaking is useful in work of art in classroom. They explain that talking with themselves, talking in groups or with peers, empower children to plan, clarify for themselves what they really want and what difficulties they have and update their experiences based on their improvements in their work.

Studies of Eisenhauer (2006), clarify another aspects of Autonomy of learner that can be acquired in work of art. She had worked on the discourse of subjectivity and *subjectivization*, as important part of postmodern visual culture. She refers to Faubion (1998), that put forward inquiry as determinant aspect of subjectivation through which subject ask questions about his/her entity, should and shouldn't of this entity, his/her situation and the posture that he/she should have towards reality or imaginary, as means to gain a role of a subject of any kind of knowledge. Accordingly, visual culture, resulted before as significant part of art education in postmodern understanding, is rather an environment of questioning, not only the discipline of information and skills of visual materials (Mirzoeff, 1998). And to know about the one who is seeing, about subjectivity, is as important and demanding for survey, as to know about the seen object (Eisenhauer 2006).

#### **2.2.4 pupil's Motivation for Learning and Sense of Ownership**

One of the most significant factors in studying about pupils' performance in school during last decades has been their motivation. Assessed by John Dewey

(1910), the philosopher and educator that claim one reason for failure of educational goals is that the big gap between the mostly abstract concepts taught in school and the everyday life of pupils, cause them to not see any convincing reason that how studying in school is useful for them (Davis, Hawley, McMullan & Spilka, 1997). Despite all the attention drawn by this problem, it has remained more or less the same issue of education in modern schooling (Platten Killeen, Evans and Danko, 2003).

Kinzig & Nakai (1995), suggest that a way for increasing children's motivation for learning is to design the learning activities that children can be actively engaged in and make them to feel that their contribution is influential. This feeling consequently cause that they see their abilities applied and enhancing. They will be proud of this feeling and highly motivated to continue. But pupils are not easy to convinced that the school work is worth involving in. the term *intrinsic motivation* integrates group of features for a school work, like interesting, joyful, satisfying and challenging, that might improve this possibility (Platten Killeen, Evans and Danko, 2003). To fulfil such a quality the teacher should be a facilitator rather than the absolute owner of the knowledge. He or she should not be the only one that own and can reveal the right answers. The teacher just put the problem, help pupils to find it interesting and let the pupils to work on their own thoughts and solutions. Creativity has a lot to do with these features. A study done by Amabile in 1983 showed that when the pupils are free to display their achievements creatively in doing school activity rather than being have to target the teachers satisfaction, their performance improve significantly.

Platten Killeen, Evans and Danko (2003), in their search for association between pupils sense of ownership of learning and permanent art work in school, have stressed on the crucial influence of children's sense of control over their social and academic being in school on their performance there.

Olsson indicates that as feeling our emotions through any activity make us to sense our vitality, allowing space for joy in learning setting, cause learners to engage in practices with more motivation. Olsson continues, we cannot expect

purity to domain the children's construction of knowledge in creative works, and cannot assess their understanding in the frame of false and true. Children has this right and ability to challenge the given representation of truth, when they are making sense of their own truth in work of visual art. They master in creatively asking questions that can be meaningful and guiding in construction of the truth that makes sense to them.

In another study, O'Neil & Barton (2005), explain that during doing a movie project pupils tried to use their personal point of view or the way they themselves understood science. This caused the final movie project to be very close to their lives.

### **2.2.5 Self - Expression**

Drawing on thoughts of Lowenfeld (1952), on significance of early experience of free artistic works and explorations, on children's individual self- awareness, Gude (2009), argues that free engagement with different things such as materials, pictures or thoughts, provide the child with the unique experience of finding her/his separated self as the one who feels and makes and practice to pay careful attention to the environment, the attention that is not demanded and stimulated by the dangers that environment may include, rather during experiencing the amazement and awareness of possibilities in acting and communicating with it. accordingly, quality of the final outcomes of child's artistic work is in next position compared to the unique experience of connection among self, doing and product.

Lowenfeld (1952), believes that visual art is the tool for children's *self- identification*, and Gude (2009), asserts that despite the big difference in children of our time compared to that of him, visual art education can still act as a facilitator of telling own stories by pupils. By means of art education, children are equipped with tools and skills to express the most complicated, personal or difficult- to - explain experiences of themselves. Then, they can represent these experiences in different media of images, signs, words, voices, with all contradictions, challenges, juxtaposition and echoes that they may cause. For representing the own

story, and through remembering it, different cultural, emotional and intellectual signifiers of the context and the narrator, form and reform the story. The story connect with other stories, images, and concepts, during this process, and this is how the artist constructs own special meaning (Hebidge, 1979). This is also the artist itself that is reformed by means of remembering the known and felt experience as well as the new meanings and associations of own story constructed through this process (Gude, 2009). Through this reviewing and reforming the perception of self, the artist notice the contradictions, multiplicities and deficiencies, inside it, and accept that even an apparently coherent entity, with the most important reasons for us to defend, comprise aspects that may surprise us, cannot explain them and should accept the continuously - transforming nature of them (Mitchell, 1988). These features, that are difficult to explain by words in a precise way, are more possible to be felt through artwork in which reconsidering and reforming of self happens (Gude, 2009).

## **2.3 Cognitive Development**

### **2.3.1 Knowledge Construction (Rhizomatic Learning)**

An introduction to this perspective on learning can be the way Craft (2005) define it. He Use the way Piaget (1973), describe learning as inventing, to assert that learning that is not invented by the learner is not more than storing in mind (Craft, 2005).

Theory of Deleuze and Guattari (1994), on learning is in the heart of the way learning is considered in this study.

Deleuze and Guattari (1994), in explaining their perspective on thinking, use an example of biology that is called *Rhizome* to describe the way of growing that happens by mass of its alteration and there is not an end or restriction for it (?). By this model in fact, they depict about any complex non-hierarchical system. They put these kind of systems in contrast with tree- shape structures (Alexander,

1988), that are less complicated and more easily measurable, because of their contents and relations being easily recognizable. The possibility to trace back the effects from the branches to the roots, is another feature of the later model, what that cannot happen in the first one (Wilson, 2003).

Deleuze (1998, p. 61) believes that children learn as rhizome works:

Children never stop talking about what they are doing or trying to do: exploring milieus, by means of dynamic trajectories, and drawing up maps of them (Deleuze, 1998, p, 61).

This idea resemble the perspective of John Dewey on learning that is a process of constant development and change (Garrison, 1997).

Based on the metaphor of rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari critique the conservative definition of knowledge and the ways for gaining it (Allan, 2013). They argue that thoughts about something does not make a hundred percent accurate image of it as knowledge about it, then, getting knowledge about something is a never ending process that grows in different aspects. Our perceptions are not exactly perceptions of, limited exclusively by the objects that origin from. Rather they are creatively crafted by the thinkers like a work of visual art. Like all artistic elements that construct an art piece (Semetsky, 2003). Based on their definition of knowledge, it is not possible to be simplified in static combination of facts, rather, comprise dynamic process of searching, an experimental and practical experience, through which the reciprocal influencing happen between us and the learning object. The reality of the learning object is modified by the senses by which we experience it. While the learner subject is as temporary as the object. Accordingly, Deleuze and Guattari are against the Cartesian perspective in which, there are certain and distinct ideas about certain objects (Semetsky, 2009).

Learning, deleuze (1994), discuss that does not go on through encounter of representation and curiosity, rather a meaningful interaction of a sign of unknown or even unthinkable, and a need for learning should be there to fulfil it. Deleuze (1994, p. 23) specify further:

We learn nothing from those who say: 'Do as I do'. Our inly teachers are those who tell us 'Do with me', and are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity rather than propose gestures for us to reproduce.... When a body combine some of its own distinctive point with those of a wave, it espouses the principle of a repetition which is no longer that

of a same, but involves the other - involve differences, from one wave and one gesture to another and carries that difference through the repetitive space thereby constituted. To learn is in dead, to constitute this space of an encounter with signs, in which the distinctive points renew themselves in each other, and repetition takes place while disguising itself

Here is an example of using this perspective in integrating art in learning science. Olsson (2013) in her project in University of Stockholm (2013), and by using the rhizomatic learning theory of Deleuze and Guattari, studies the sense construction of children through learning in the field of linguistic education and specifically reading and writing practices. In this study, through an artistic work children visualize words. By observing works of different pupils, Olsson (2013) recognize their sense production through experiencing writing, freely and in artistic way. Children connect physical and psychical features, to what they are writing a bout. It means that they write them in a way that they sense, with their very personal feeling about that specific phenomena. Olsson (2013), conclude that this experience is an example of constructing knowledge by children in rhizomatic way.

### **2.3.2 Experimental Learning**

The term Experimental Learning in this study is mostly defined based on theories of Dewey(1916) about importance of personal experiences in learning, and also in Deleuze (1994, p. 154):

The problematic situation- that is, the one requiring learning - is of the nature of real experience that forms *an intrinsic genesis*, not an extrinsic conditioning.

An example of using Dewey(1916)'s theory of experimental encounter, with phenomena, is the study of Smith - Shank and Soganchi (2011), about positioning pupils in an environments other than classroom like an urban space, that give pupils the chance of facing with more complex visual manifestations compared to the limited and controlled visual resources that they may face in a classroom, and reinforce them to become more considering towards cultural and social qualities of what they see and other different associations of them. They will also be more keen about what they would like to see, and do not find there.

Allan (2013), use the example of her study, through which they invited group of ten to twelve year old pupils to visual art work experiences that were in relation with some school lessons, promised to be different with normal school activities. They did some very various artistic experiences that were planned to be done and learnt embodied and not passively, and with more attempts for expressing rather than understanding. One activity for example was dance in relation with physics through which pupils should imitate physical qualities of attraction and repulsion by putting their moving bodies toward or away from other pupils' bodies. Then, it was experiencing bodily these physical qualities.

After doing different activities, some pupils were reported to comment about the experiment that through it they 'get to do stuff', referring to embodiment, and it was more useful for learning because in 'doing stuff', 'you think more'. They also asserted that 'you didn't have to do work; you just got to do the fun stuff. It was work, but it was fun work.'

### **2.3.3 Creativity**

Robinson (2006), claims that despite all progressive point of views on education, there is still strong complaining that creativity is ruined in schools. One typical holistic approach in schools that partly cause this problem, is that the questions that pupils are supposed to learn concepts through finding answer for them, are put for the already- known answers (Malaguzzi, 1987). Then, the freedom is not given to the pupils nor to ask, neither to explore for finding the answer (Ferrari, et al, 2009). Moreover, many teachers accept merely standard answers not the ones that have been gained by personal exploration and creative problem solving that are accordingly put in diverse ways (Beghetto, 2007b). This method has origin in the educational perspective that give more credit to transferring information over empowering the skills (Robinson, 2001).

Teachers also mostly indicate on the relevance of pupil's comments to the main discussion and discourage them about making any mistake, what they really need to do for being creative (Ferrari, et al, 2009). In fact, the novelty of the pupil's ideas are sacrificed in order to stay in the limited circle of ideas relevant



to the learning matter of the day or the question put by the teacher (Beghetto, 2007b).

Moreover, the general qualities of a creative pupil is not desirable of a classic teacher who teach in a classroom with classic educational attitudes. Creative pupils are not very easily following and obedient. Their personal ambitions that they want to follow may not be very conforming with the regular order of teaching and authority of teachers (Runco, 1999; Ng & Smith 2004).

To discuss the relation between creativity and learning, Craft (2005), hints on originality and novelty as important factors that make a thought or act creative. In other word, she define it as furthering what a person already know or is able to do and this is how it is in very close relation with learning. Since, according to her, learning is connecting new things to what we already know in a way that we make personally sense of it. Then learning is not, other than constructing knowledge, the process in which due to strong dependence on involvement of the learner in this creation, creativity has a huge contribution.

There are other argues in supporting usefulness of creativity of work of visual arts in schools beside other courses.

Eisner (1991), argue that having the experience of working arts give the performer this awareness that there are always possibilities that have not been conceptualized before (Eisner, 1991).

Rolling (2016), claims that it is important to think about visual art education in relation with other subjects, because most of pupils with whom art teachers work, will not choose visual art as their profession, but they will need creativity in their future profession and this is where art practices and studies, might support them.

#### **2.3.4 Critical Thinking**

Ability for critical thinking or as described Socratic self-criticism, applicable on personal and social traditions of own, mentioned by Nussbaum (2010), as one of the qualities of a decent global citizenship.

The skill of critical thinking, is practiced and acquired by young members of a society if they learn to examine their own thoughts, works and results during their schooling time, if they get to ask themselves why they chose one answer or point of view over the other. This way, they will learn how to take part accurately in a dialogue, in which different point of views are examined and discussed far away from emotions and cultural biases. Critical thinking can be taught in schools just if it acts as the holistic point of view that dominant all different activities there. It means that all children during everyday activities of school feel free to actively and effectively take part in learning process. When they find their voice to be heard and taken seriously, when they see their critical ideas likely to bring to life to make change, they will feel more responsible about believing their own ideas and expressing them confidently (Nussbaum, 2010).

Based on her study in which she compared the critical disposition of art and non- art pupils, Lampert (2006a), conclude that the inquiry - oriented learning in art studies makes the art pupils to assess the subjects more critically compared to others. King (1994) on her work about ways for enhancing critical thinking in pupils, resulted that open- ended questions encourage pupils to think deeply as they will need to compare and reconcile diverse number of point of views. When this open- endedness is expanded to the whole stream of questions and responses by other pupils in classroom, much more various and novel ideas are needed to be considered simultaneously. That is the result which enhance the critical thinking of pupils, yet again.

Moreover, Lampert (2013), argues that when a task of art is given to pupils to do, they are in fact working on an open - ended question to solve. If they are asked to draw a tree, each one draw a tree based on their own unique image of tree. This is how pupils practice the difference ways of solving a problem.

### **2.3.5 Diversity in Learning Abilities**

Ferrari, et al. (2009), stress on unbalance between different subjects in mainstream curriculum in most of schools. Reminding about Gardner's (1983), theory of *different type of intelligences*, they discuss the differences in pupils' abilities and ways of learning. This point of view shed light on the demand for more progressive educational curriculum which provide various forms of learning possibilities with considering the various kinds of intelligences. The suggestion to fulfil this demand is to allocate time for cross- curricular teaching, in order to provide vast educational perspective in which pupils have diverse options to develop their creativity, thinking skills and learning - to - learn abilities by means of working the subjects that are more compatible with their own special intelligences and ways of learning (Ferrari, et al. 2009).

### **2.3.6 Imagination**

Eisner (2008), hints on imagination as an important factor in visual arts, that has not taken seriously enough in other fields of teaching. He calls it source of new possibilities. He claims that humans' imagination can be applied in all fields of learning as arena of knowledge creation. To cultivate imagination in the pupils' minds and habits of learning, he believes that means to support them to explore new areas of everything rather than make them to stick all together in the same place that other have previously settled in and determined for them. Alike the manner it works in visual arts that the artist go for the destiny that does not know from the beginning, where it is and how it look like exactly, open - ended tasks works well for nurturing imagination. With no pre -determined goal in these tasks, pupils are free to practice with their imagination and this is how they will discover the areas that would not go to if their destination has been previously decided for them.

### 2.3.7 pupil - Centred Learning

Foucault (1979), discuss that the culture that domain in the institutions related to children, can strongly influence the way discourse of the power relation between teacher and pupils become reinforced, reproduced and distributed.

Devine (2002), argue about the minority position of children within the power relation structure of the society in their relation with adults, and the ignored capacities of them for being taken seriously. These approaches are in the same line with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), with Articles 12 and 13 in which is stated:

Children's right to be consulted on matters affecting them.

Devine (2002), furthers discussion to children's position in school that is also inferior to teachers and its negative influence on how children see their own role in their learning as well as the way they form their identity and practice their individuality in having a voice and express themselves. Devine, connect this perception of pupils to the authoritative position of teachers within the different interactional activities of school, including determining being right or wrong, about teaching materials or behaviors.

Scardamalia & Bereiter (1991), by referring to Sinclair & Coulthard (1975), discuss this issue about the direction and content of the transferred knowledge in schools. In the traditional teaching methods, direction of transferring the information is exclusively from teacher to pupils, Which gives the control of zone of proximal development to them. The question asking and evaluating the answers is also exclusively by them and accordingly, determining what is worth to be learnt and what is right and wrong (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Teachers just discuss materials and ask questions that themselves has knowledge on it, then, they control and confine the process of learning to what themselves know. Even by giving the right to children to ask questions, and in a same time directing their question asking, the control can remained in teachers hands (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1991).

Brown and Palincsar (1982), suggest the *reciprocal teaching* approach that create zone of proximal development that teacher's role is just to support children to make questions and improve their richness. In contrast with traditional teaching and question-answer systems in which the goal is to get the accurate predefined answer, in reciprocal teaching the goal is that pupils gradually be able to think independently, perform a thoughtful discussion and Draw out the meanings for themselves (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1991).

### **2.3.8 Learning based on pupils' life**

Dewey (1910)'s theory of Psychologizing is useful in answering the question of curriculum designers who concern to relevancy of school subjects to what children experience in their normal everyday life. This theory is helpful in revealing the interactive nature of a progressive curriculum that support the teacher and pupils to cooperate in constructing knowledge that reflect the real experiences of their life and the diversity that is inseparable part of life of a contemporary human (Thomas, 2012).

Visual Art education can provide a prepared field for implementing this perspective. Such methods encourage visual art for everybody and free personal exploration by means of work of art in relation with their own life, and develop sensitivity towards the personal meanings that they can make in this relation (Roberts, 2005).

Within the contemporary perspectives on visual art education, there is a paradigmatic change to consider the *everyday aesthetic experiences*, included as significant part of art curriculum (Duncum, 1999).

In this context, new questions have been asked like; through which methods can the art classrooms be supportive and encouraging for students to care and ask questions about their world and life and why should they do so (Eisenhauer, 2006)? Drawing the student's attention to their everyday cultural experiences, Eisenhauer (2006), argue that, encourage pupils' motivations for involving in critical and analytical thinking about their life. Under such attitude, what pupils do in visual art education settings are producing critical and cultural objects.

## **2.4 Social Development**

### **2.4.1 Participation**

Devine (2002), hints on the traditional attitudes on children which define them incompetent in comparison with adults. Having this attitude, he believes that their chance for active participation and accordingly their agency in learning process could not be used properly. Progressive approaches on children's capacities for more participation in the society (Roche, 1999, Cockburn, 1998), challenged older beliefs in which children are considered as incapable of agentic performer of their rights, and are looked down in dynamic of control within their interaction with adults. Penn (1999), notes that for helping children to practice their agency and to highlight their potential for active social participation, their self-image should be a necessarily autonomous creature, and it get form in the way adults treat them. They should consider a respect and belief for themselves and their learning abilities that merely can get form as a reflection of these attitudes in adults' behaviour (Sheridan & Pramling Samuelsson, 2001).

On the other hand, leaning capacity of children grows when there is a social support for it and when they freely participate through knowledge building process (Edwards, 2003). And that participation result in knowledge building when different points of views are freely shared through an interaction (Berthelsen & Brownlee, 2005). Corsaro et al. (2002), discuss that children's learning happens in optimal level through their active and creative social participation, and this is the cultural value that should rule the educational settings.

### **2.4.2 Understanding Diversity**

Any society comprise contradictions, and multiplicities, that are not acceptable by an essentialist point of view. Therefore, in order to develop a democratic society, citizens, should have experience, perception and openness towards differences and contradictions within it. By facing with own inner contradictions through practicing art, and mastering the skills for forming and experiencing

own voice, , future members of the society have more capabilities to form a democratic society that has comprised all that different voices that can tolerate other different ones (Gude, 2009). The diversity and flexibility of range of concepts possible to be expressed by arts, give the art pupils this chance to try to understand the different meaning that other pupils have constructed, and accordingly the skill to comprehend subtlety of meanings. For a person who has experienced this high level of understanding, contradiction and complexity provide joyful chance for exploring and understanding more (Gude, 2009).

### 2.4.3 Sympathy

A significant quality of a citizen suggested by Nussbaum (2010), is what she calls *narrative imagination*, referring to the ability of people to put themselves in the place of other people and try to understand what they would have felt or done if they were in the other person's situation. An important part of this understanding is to accept that this ability can never work perfectly and that the inner world of any person cannot be ever totally perceived. Taking into consideration the influence that this cultivation makes in the way pupils will act socially, later in confrontation with their fellow global citizens, how can we call an educational system as advanced, when it lacks the quality of nurturing sympathy in the pupils.

Nussbaum (2010), claims that art is one of the best disciplines for developing sympathy in pupils. By means of imagination, that is an essential element of work of art, we can have an insight to other people's feelings, thoughts and imagination. An attempt that we normally skip through normal activities and thoughts of everyday, and this is exactly how we can shed a light on the ignored aspect of the our society. Imagination is helpful for experiencing about productions, as well as difficulties of group of people who are whether in culture, gender, religion or because of geographical or political reasons, different with us. This quality, beside the free and fun atmosphere of works of art, when is seized by art educators to craft deliberately for the goal, make them a bearable or even attractive vehicle for experiencing, expressing point of view towards, discussing

and re-visioning about humanistic dilemmas and cultural and religious traditions, without the anxiety that normal discussion about them may cause. This is why the joy and openness of these activities are very important. The features that construct the atmosphere in which pupils first experience the democracy that they are supposed to learn more about through perception and acknowledgement of differences in a heterogeneous society.

### **3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY**

This research started based on an inherent concern and question about the importance of visual art education with very personal motivations. Therefore, vast amount of studies were done to support the later findings. For gathering data,



the focus is minimized on visual art education in Finnish primary schools. primary experience about visual art education were done with group of teacher training pupils, that was not successful. Finally data were gathered by open – ended interview about the topic, focusing on Finnish primary schools.

### **3.1 Conventional Content Analysis**

I chose qualitative method for this research because I believe that doing this research I am facing with phenomena with complicated different aspects that need to be analysed considering those complexities. There are psychological and social associations with the responses of participants, that need to be analysed with a method that consider this humane features. I believe that these different aspects should be deeply thought in their multi relations with other aspects, compared and explained. Therefore, numbers cannot appropriately explain the importance of different factors, because these features are rather explained by qualities. This is why, almost from the beginning the proper method seemed inevitably the qualitative.

Considering the main research question, “what are the meanings of art education on emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils”, I needed to go deep inside the mind of the participants by means of their answers, to see how does art education really means to them. Content analysis is mostly used for sense – making out of volume of qualitative material, in order to access to the central meanings (Patton, 2001). And among different approaches of this method, I found the conventional content analysis more suitable for my research. According to Hsieh & Shanon (2005), it is a applied when the goal is to describe a phenomena. And my topic is about the meaning of art education, and in finding the answers I need to describe these meanings. Moreover, I needed to let the different groups of features related to development, to flow out of the data, while I needed to involve deeply in data waiting for new insight to came out. The demands that according to Hsieh & Shanon (2005) fulfil by this method of analysing data.

The interviewees might remember and narrate their experiences and put their beliefs with the worlds that they have access on in the moment. But for understanding what they really mean and the indirect thoughts that they have behind what they say, I need to analyse their words more carefully. Accordingly, in this study I chose conventional content analysis to read these messages between the lines and access to new categories of qualities and new insights. However, there were challenges in analyzing and drawing out the themes. Conventional content analysis is so flexible to do and the certainly correct way of doing it is not clearly defined. It is the researcher's decision to decide how to do it (Weber 1990). Then, I decided to use this flexibility and draw out the themes that sounded relevant to my studies, and make sense based on my research questions and aims, as such, I direct the whole process of interview and question asking.

The other challenge in content analysis is that the researcher in the beginning feels in chaos, because there are so much data that may look not related at first (Backman & Kyngäs 1998). There were so much different point of views about influence of work of art in pupils' performance and learning in school. It was both difficult to separate and connect all of them at first. Then I put them in different groups of themes, when they appeared in point of views of interviewees together. And finally I categorized them based on the different group of development aspects. According to Dey (1993), Hickey & Kipping (1996), it is a big challenge when there will be too many different things in one category (Dey 1993, Hickey & Kipping 1996). Like, what I did in putting so many different themes in a group of cognitive development, but fortunately, this title was well covering the all seemingly different qualities. Because as Elo (2008), says there should be final few titles to categorize so many themes. Otherwise, it is the sign of unsuccessfulness of the researcher to have so many not categorized themes at the end of the research process (Elo 2008).

It is very important that the researcher manage the chaos by remaining focused on the factors that are really relevant. (Elo, 2008). Then, another challenge

was to skip the themes that sounded interesting, while were not related to my main goal of research.

Backman & Kyngäs (1998), claims that to explain that how the research process has been done is the most difficult part of the research itself. Although the more concrete actions can be explained, but the actions that the researcher has just decided to do based on inherent motivations and under influence of personal insight, are difficult to explain (Backman & Kyngäs, 1998).

### **3.2 Research topic, Aims and Questions**

Topic of this research is “the meanings of art education on emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils.” Then the aim is to discover what kind of meanings art education have in the mentioned different developmental aspects. It is both about how art education can accompany other courses to make them more rich, easy to learn and meaningful for pupils and also, about the progressive perspectives and believes dominating art education that how they can be meaningful for approaches on teaching in schools generally. Very different aspects of children’s development have been considered in current normal situation in different schools, and how they can mean differently in artistic approaches.

My first image about the topic was that art education can be meaningful in very different aspects of pupils’ development. Beside my interest on art education and my questions about its importance, there was also this concern of mine about the very narrowly defined concept of development in more traditional perspectives of education and the passive role of a learner that is considered for them in these point of views. While, art education seems to promise more diverse and agentic qualities to demand and encourage. Features like pupils’ autonomy, empowerment, creativity, imagination, their role in constructing knowledge, their divers abilities, their sense of sympathy, their right for participation and so on. Therefore, I was curious to explore very different aspects of development that art

education can contribute to, in its three division of emotional, cognitive and social.

Accordingly, the question of this research is:

What are the meanings of art education on emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils?

### **3.3 The Participants and the Data**

The participants of this research included 5 teacher training students of university of Jyväskylä and 2 primary school art teachers of this city. They took part in 4 interviews that each one took at least forty minutes. After transcription, there were 34 pages of interview. Teacher training students 1 and 2 took part as pair in first interview, student 3 singularly in the second one, students 4 and 5 in third interview as pairs and primary art teacher 1 and 2 as pairs in the fourth one. The teacher training students had just passed a visual art education course, teaching by Marjo Autio Hiltunen, in order to have some knowledge about visual arts as future subject teachers. During the course they had studied about very diverse areas in this subject including techniques, international arts, political arts, art integration and so on. They also had some experiences of internship in primary schools. The teacher 1 was a substance art teacher with few years of experience and the teacher 2 was a fixed primary school art teacher with ten years of experiences.

At first the teacher training students took part in an experience in which they drew artistic patterns based on geometrical shapes. This experience was designed previously by me, under supervision of Marjo Autio Hiltunen, the lecturer of the art education course, to present the students the geometrical order in artistic shapes of Islamic art. After getting introduced, students chose among different patterns to draw, having both goals to find out about geometrical orders that made the drawing possible and also to produce an artistic final result. After having this experience, I felt that I cannot gather my data by my observation of it. Then I considered it as a preliminary experience about work of art, to be followed

by an interview with some of the participants. Then, the interviews were carried out after about a month when they have just finished the course. Interviews were in pair. It means that except one case, there were two interviewees. It was very helpful because the answers and point of views of one participant could make other one to remember new things or cause opposition. Interaction of two different point of views was useful in increasing the dynamism of the interview. As explained, the last two interviewees, were not students, rather, two primary school art teachers, with good level of experience in the field that was very useful in putting forward reasonable, reliable and novel ideas.

Because of the very vast area of the issues related to the topic and questions of these study, and in order to not lose the very different and unpredictable answers that I might receive and to not confine the interviewees to what was in my mind, I chose the open-ended interview as method of gathering my data. (See the appendix 2). As based on Hoffman (2007), by this method rich and extensive volume of data can be gathered, and it might provide possibility for emergence of matters that the interviewer has not thought about before. (Hoffman, 2007). The general guide lines and goals were specified, while searching for novel ideas of different interviewees, and in response to the answers, the similar main questions were asked in different manners.

### **3.4 Analysis of the interviews**

This interviews were analyzed in order to find an answer for the research question. To carry out this goal, at the first step of the analysis, the sentences of interviewees were grouped based on the meanings of different terms and words of them, considering the research question. These meanings were the keys to organize different themes. The found themes were very divers, about different issues in visual art education and students learning and development, such as freedom, creativity, authority, student - centered learning, knowledge construction, sympathy and some others. In the second step, the themes are categorized according to mutual relation between them. The mutuality was meaningful in a way that

made it possible to group the themes as different aspects of development, that are emotional, cognitive and social. The figure 1 illustrate examples of grouping the words of interviewees based on the association of their meaning with themes and developmental aspects.

Some themes, might seem too similar, while they are slightly different and this difference is necessary to be indicated. For example, about themes such as learning based on students' life and experimental learning, the first one is about bringing pupils' attention to their environment and make connection with subjects in order to make them more meaningful, while the second one indicates on the experimental way of learning that is learning by doing.

Finally, the whole analysis, including the three groups of developments, are answers to the question of this research that is:

What are the meanings of art education on emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils?

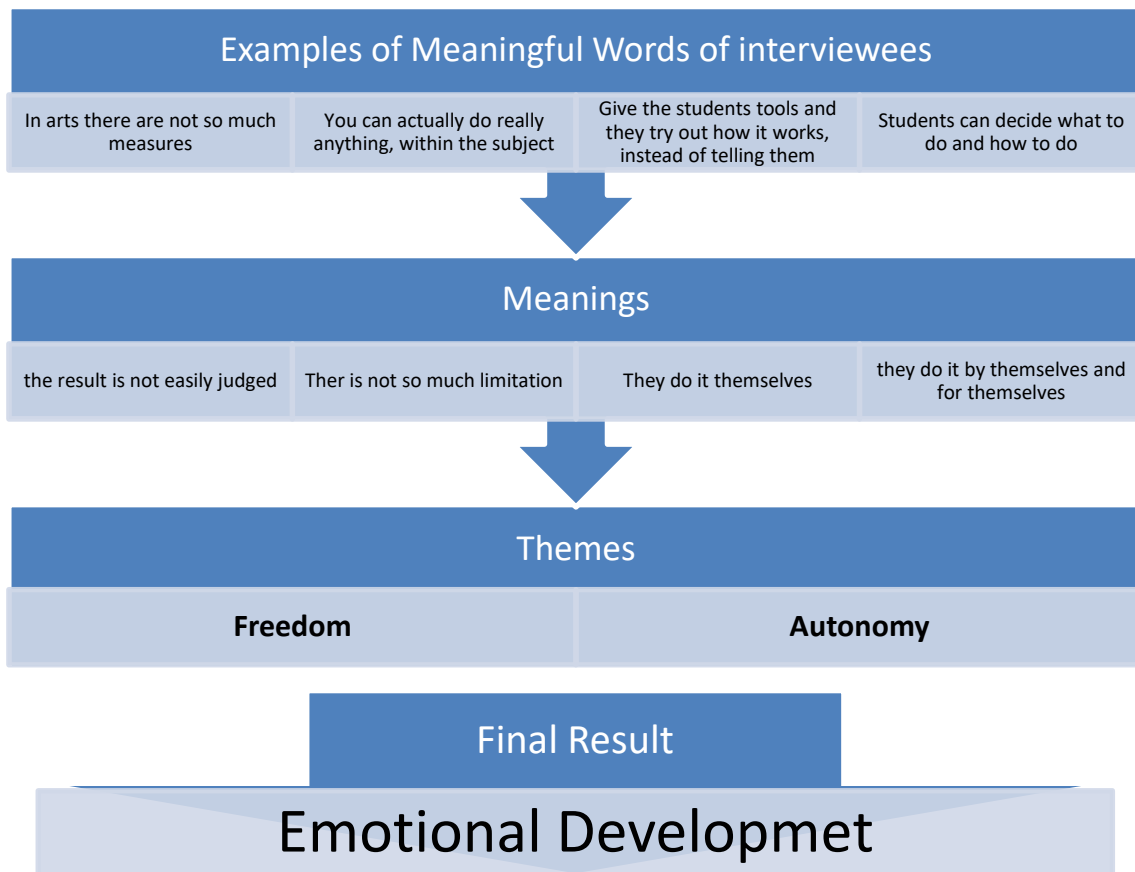


FIGURE 1. An Example of Analysing Data

## 4 RESULTS

This chapter presents the main results of this study. The results are categorized under three sections, and named based on final three aspects of development of pupils in relation with art education, including *Emotional development*, *Cognitive development* and *Social development*. Through interviews with teacher training students and art teachers about meanings of art education on pupils' development, different themes were derived, that finally were categorized in relation with three emotional, cognitive and social aspects of development. The three sections including different themes in sub – sections aim to answer the research question. To introduce the results briefly, the aspects of development in relation with art education, and different themes related to them, are illustrated in a chart in Figure 2.

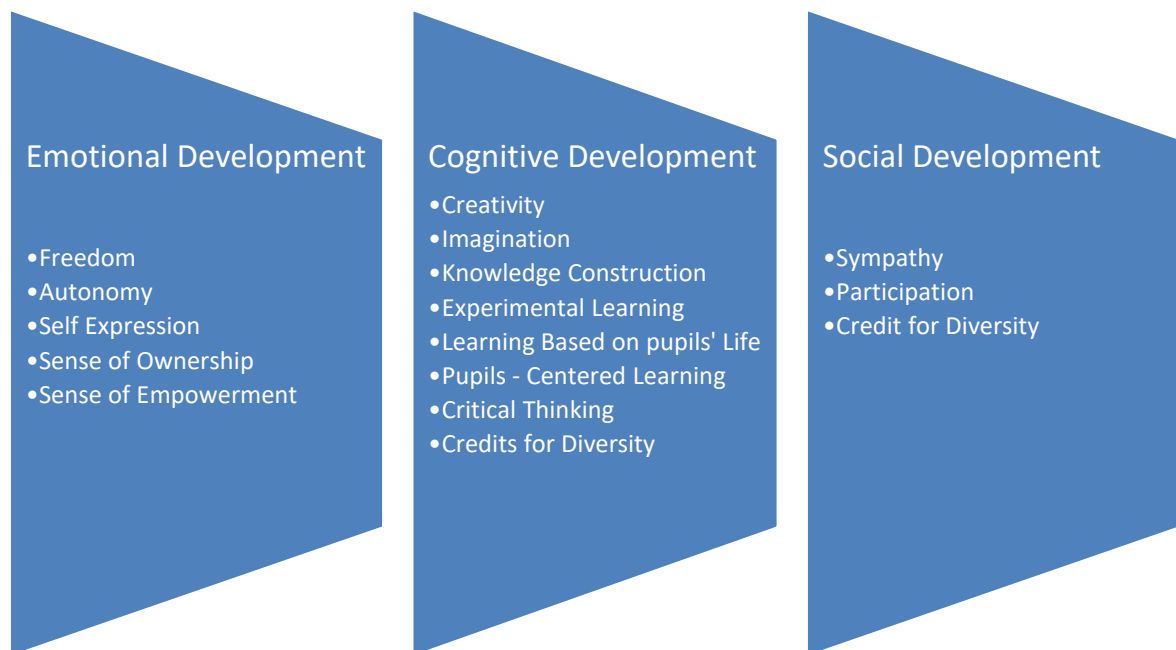


FIGURE 2. The Chart of Meanings of Art Education on Pupils' Development



The interviewees included 5 number of teacher training students of University of Jyväskylä and 2 of art teachers of primary schools in Jyväskylä. Accordingly, data and findings are about meanings of art education on emotional, cognitional and social development of pupils in Finnish primary schools. They just put their point of views about meanings of visual art education in Finnish schools very generally, and not answering directly about development or different themes. The themes and developmental aspects are derived from their words later through analysis. Each theme, how it means in relation with art education and its relation with specific aspect of development is explained separately under different sub - sections. For supporting these justifications and also final results, examples of what interviewees have said are mentioned in each sub-section. The interviews were done in 4 different times. Each step of interview included just a pair of interviewees facing the same questions, while the second time there was just one interviewee. Accordingly, the numbers are just about the order of taking part in interviews. The examples of their sayings in this chapter are organized based on the association with different themes and the steps through they are applied for progressing the analysis in each sub - section.

## **4.1 Emotional Development in Relation with Art Education**

According to the findings of this study, visual art education foster the emotional development of pupils through meaningful connection with the following themes. Freedom, autonomy, self - expression, sense of ownership and sense of empowerment.

### **4.1.1 Freedom**

Freedom is a very fundamental feature of any creative activity including visual arts. Visual art class is a chance for students to create freely, rather than following

what the teacher try to teach them or copying her. It is a chance to practice freedom, the quality that is necessary to be aware of in other learning activities and personal situations. Practicing freedom through work of visual art in school, might be useful for pupils to learn that they are free as a human.

S5: If I had to say what art education means to me in one word, I would say freedom. Because you have so much moving space. You can actually do really anything, within the subject.

Student 5 talks about the difference between the arts and other subjects. There is more flexibility in arts and this gives freedom to the pupils. In art classes students are free from the tough instructions of other subjects.

S3: In art, I think you cannot measure, I think art is freedom. I mean you see in your own way...

The answer of the Student 3 indicates on the fact that visual art is less measurable in comparison with other subjects. It is a quality that makes art a good vehicle for practicing freedom as she says, because pupils are not so concern about the judgement on their results and do it freely.

T1: They should be reminded that they do not have to copy anything.

According to teacher 1 what makes visual art education unique as a chance of practicing freedom is that school is a place in which children are mostly in the position of a naive that should copy the teacher. They should also copy other grown - ups in other situations of their life. While work of visual art is a unique opportunity that put them in the position of a free creator. By this means they learn that they do not have to copy in all situations.

#### **4.1.2    Autonomy**

Among the sayings of participants about art education, there are indications on qualities of art education, or integration of arts in subject teaching that support the idea of autonomous work of pupils through work of visual art.

T1: They afraid to ask because they afraid of making mistakes. But, little by little you teach them to trust their own opinion and feelings that OK it is your work. And understand that it is up to them how to do their work. Then, it is important to teach them to trust themselves.

Due to the flexibility of arts, pupils feelings are more important than many other things. It is less likely to make mistake compared to science courses, then it is up to them how to do it. They can do it in their own way autonomously, because it is their personal feelings that matters. They can trust their feelings and not be afraid of being wrong, and it gives them self - confidence. They learn to use this confidence in many other activities and act autonomously. Visual art is a practical work. Then students can do it with less need for help from teacher.

S2: I like this idea to give the tools to children and they can try out how it works, instead of tell them,... kind of give them freedom to try and find the way... they need to feel comfortable to do the things, like their own way for doing it.

From the words of Student 2 it can be understood that visual arts are practical and there are tools in pupils hands. Then, they can do try and error with less dependency to teachers. Through this try and error and working with tools pupils explore a lot and master many skills, and by this experience they see that they can do a lot by themselves and autonomously. They will find their personal way of doing things and learn how to learn.

S4: Creating something from you, from the student. And student can decide what to do and how to do and how to have goal. And think to how do it. Creating something for herself.

Student 4 is again indicating on the possibility that work of art provide for pupils to act totally by themselves. A chance to think that what they want and how can do it. And it is totally for their own sake. They practice to be autonomous.

#### **4.1.3 Self - Expression**

Through the interviews, the interviewees many times claimed that visual art education is a chance for pupils to talk about their feelings, and discuss their point of views.

S4: Small children can look at one art piece and discuss what they think, what feelings may it contain and why is it this way and what comes next.

Student 4 claims that during visual art class pupils can talk about different art pieces of each other or famous artists and express their point of views and feelings. Through expressing they can understand more clearly about their feelings and thoughts and master this skill.

S1: I think [art education] means that ... that students get tools to do their own art and express themselves, how they want to express it.

S2: Yes, express themselves, instead of what we want them to do.

By using the word tools, Student 1 is implying that pupils has an extent of authority and possibility to do their own work. She means that the pupil is given this freedom to express what is in their mind. She also use directly the term expressing themselves about the content and the method of work. Student 2 inspired by answer of her pair, confirm that because in arts pupils do not have to copy, and their work can be about their initial thoughts and feelings, they can express themselves.

The mentioned chances for self – expression, also help pupils to learn that it matters that they express themselves and it is why this chance is given to them.

#### **4.1.4 Sense of Ownership**

Through the interviewee's words there are many cases of indication that pupils act for their own sake in visual arts. It can be resulted that this quality of visual arts gives more central role to the pupils in learning process and they feel that what is done, learnt or discussed in school belongs to them and they are the owner. The feeling that they might not have in learning science while they have the more passive role. Then when interviewees were asked about integration of visual arts with other subjects, they found it useful in transferring the sense of ownership that exist in art education to other subjects.

S3: And in doing art, things will come more personal.

By using the word personal, student 3 stress on the association of visual arts with making the learning process close to the pupils innate issues. They will feel that learning is for them and to some extent directed by them.

S4: I think in art, students... they are free to do it in their own way, and they create. I think the level in art education for trying new things and decide how to do it is very high.

S4 talks about the freedom of pupils to create in their own world. The very strong feeling of ownership is the reward of free and personal creation. This feeling is much stronger in visual art education compared to other subjects learnings.

S3: [In] new curriculum in Finnish schools different subjects should communicate and there is no just one subject during one time. And I think, it could be good for some pupils, because they will say, oh we have art now, not just math or just history and it could be more fun and more playful. Using art can make learning other subjects less stressful.

Student 3 hints on the point that other interviewees also mentioned when they were asked that what is the meaning of integrating art in other subjects. She claims that it is this new act will bring the good feeling of arts in other subjects. This good feeling is about the freedom of pupils. What makes them relieve them from stress and help them to connect more eagerly to the learning process. Because what they learn is connected with what they create and they feel that they own it.

#### **4.1.5 Sense of Empowerment**

It is mentioned in different ways by the interviewees about the authority and responsibility that is allocated to pupils in visual art education. These features result in previous themes as discussed, but they eventually result in empowerment of pupils. The free creator role that were highlighted before, is the role of a powerful actor in the educational setting. In the following examples interviewers talk about the tools that visual arts give to pupils to feel impressive and powerful.

Art can be also a tool for children to search inside themselves to see what is really important to them, what they really want and what they really are. Art is important then the pupil is important

T1: By doing the art projects, you have done different steps of planning, starting, doing and finishing of one process by yourself, or together with your group. And see how you have controlled and managed the chaos.

T1 talks about the process of planning, starting, doing and decide to end it by the pupils. And pupils individually or in groups are responsible for doing it. It is again quality of arts that makes it possible to give the most responsibility to pupils themselves. They see their control over the process and taking order out of chaos. And this is how they have learnt skills and felt that they competent. They have been empowered.

## **4.2 Cognitive Development in Relation with Visual Art Education**

According to the findings of this study, visual art education foster the cognitive development of pupils through meaningful connection with the following themes. Creativity, imagination, knowledge construction, experimental learning, learning based on pupils life, pupils - centred learning, critical thinking and credit for diversity.

### **4.2.1 Creativity**

The more closely associated feature to visual arts is creativity. Creativity is always known as necessary feature of arts, while the creativity that is learnt through arts is an aspect of cognitive development that can be applied in other activities. It is also indicated by the interviewees that the best context for reinforcing pupils' creativity is visual art education.

S1: It is where they can be creative, because the goal is not to do something right... S2: the goal is not to find the answer... S1: but to be creative.

The concept of right and wrong is more definite in most of subjects other than arts. Then the space for children is normally quite narrow to achieve to diverse goals. While as S1 stress arts are a chance to just create something freely with no concern for right result. The more novel is the better result. Creativity can flourish the best as a result of such an openness in visual arts.

#### **4.2.2 Imagination**

Imagination is another feature that is interconnected with arts. Using imagination is part of work of art and by it sometimes the boarder of reality and imagination is mixed and need to be tested.

Imagination is helpful for work of art and it is also reinforced through it. This quality could be applied in other educational areas. Interviewees also indicated on this useful application of imagination in other subjects.

S1: For learning languages, you can listen to a story, and you can draw whatever popped up in your mind...

When Student 1 talks about drawing whatever popped up in mind in listening to the story, she hints on the imagination that is combination of hearing a story and drawing. Because such an activity can bring so many imaginary thoughts and images to mind. It might be concluded that the imagination of arts, will enrich the activity of brain during language learning.

S4: They need to use their imagination and need to figure out is this my imagination, or is this real.

As mentioned, and suggested by student 4 in visual arts, boarder of imagination and reality might be mixed. For example looking at some kind of drawings can make visual mistakes. For figuring out what is that drawing really about, mind should do some effort and apply imagination. This is how this quality is reinforced by visual arts.

#### **4.2.3 Knowledge Construction**

It was the biggest challenge for interviewees to think about pupils role in construction of knowledge. This concept, that is explained in reference data by using the example of rhizomatic model of learning, concerns the role of the learners in making sense of the information that they receive and the way they shape their understanding. Highlighting the role of learner, make the learning process similar to the work of art. This similarity is the point that is attempted to question in interviews regarding the concept of knowledge construction.

S4: For small children it is easy to just draw and think about how it is... nature related subjects, for those I think drawing is very easy and will be different kind of shapes and shadows and I think learning might be a bit more interesting with art than just with words.

When the student 4 use the words easily drawing and thinking, is implying that how for little children drawing is a way of thinking. They draw things to make sense of them. It is learning by creating. Then what they understand is not exactly what they have seen or been told, it is how they recreate it. They are building their knowledge based on that creation. Therefore by using visual arts pupils have their own tool to construct their understanding. Much more strong method compared to passively listening to the words of teacher.

S1: When you do projects for learning by using arts, it is not something that you just read in a book, but creating something based on that knowledge.

Student 1 is also hinting on the same issue. She says that Pupils create something based on the received knowledge. It means that they make sense of the information and create the knowledge in a way that they can understand.

#### **4.2.4 Experimental Learning**

The interviewees have referred a lot on experimental possibilities of visual arts and how they are useful in making the learning process more meaningful and rich for students. And this is what this study means by experimental learning. Learning by doing and facing closely and comprehensively. This kind of learning is more likely to result in a form of cognitive development.

Interviewees have been also asked about possibility of integrating art with other subjects and its association with experimental learning.

S3: When they use their hands and see what they are doing, I think it is a very good thing. Because art brings the visual things.

S4: You can also do it with your hands and how to do different kind of things...great method to develop so many small skills that are hard to learn in other subjects.

T1: Whatever you can make, you can get the help of art with its many tools that provide an experience.

By saying the term 'using hands', student 3 refer to the very practical quality of visual arts that makes the experimental learning possible. This experimenting is



a very tangible and concrete way of learning, because it is done by hands. The word hands is again used by student 4, while explaining about the divers forms of artistic works that leads to different skills to master through experience.

Art can work as catalyst, because it is easy to be related to all subjects. By the connections that it makes with real things around and different subjects, learning these subjects will be more meaningful for students. Teacher 1 use the term 'many tools' and 'experience' when is stressing on the possibilities that visual arts provide for experimental learning. Visual arts can easily connect to many real things in life and by working on this real things by hands in order to make an art piece, pupils will learn a lot, while they also develop their skills.

S3: I thought that art is the easiest one to integrate. And I think integration gives us more aspects about things and more perfect view.

Student 3 answers about integrating art in other subjects and through answering hints on the vast possibilities of visual art for this goal. 'Art is easiest one...' because it can be about everything and accordingly related to all subjects. In a same time integrating arts with subjects make them more real and tangible for students and facilitate the experimental learning.

#### **4.2.5 Learning based on pupils' life**

This theme is about how art can make the learning process and material more close to pupils life, and how it is meaningful in relation with students cognitive development. It might sound same with the experimental learning, while are very close in concept, the later one aims to make student curious and answer their questions about their environment, while the previous one concern the ways of learning.

This is the theme that have been pointed out many times by interviewees in different ways, when they asserted that visual arts are good facilitators to draw the pupils attention to the world around them and their life.

S2: Goal of art for very young children can be to make them interested in their environment...

S5: It is a great way to think about the planet that we live on.

S4: Good subject to learn inter text subjects, that you know one thing is from the other...Art education give this chance of thinking out of box.

All three students see good connection between visual arts and the world around pupils. Their indication on this connection is because of the one of central concepts of this study. Visual arts are good tool for pupils to express their understanding of this word and make sense of it. Therefore, it is through visual art that student can be encouraged to see more different things around them, think about them and explore through them.

#### **4.2.6 Pupils - Centered Learning**

By deriving this theme among the data, the aim has been to express the point of view of this study about the power relation issue in schools, how giving more portion to the pupils is useful for their cognitive development and how visual art education can facilitate this process. We cannot teach children and help them to learn without knowing about them and their curiosities and interests and the ways that they see and understand things. Work of art provide a good circumstance in which teachers can understand the children deeply.

S4: Another important point for other subjects is that see and hear students. It is a key point. Who the students are, what they are, what kind of ideas they have.

While talking about the points that visual art education can have for other subjects, student 4 stress on the right of pupils to be seen and heard by teachers. This is what happens more easily in visual art education, because it is about pupils feelings and expressing it, then teachers put more effort for seeing and hearing them. this gives the more central role to pupils. Because the topic is their feelings. She also talks about pupils' being and their ideas. Again visual arts help to put pupils' being and ideas in center of the learning, because they can express and share it by visual arts.

T2: You should not do the learning just for teachers or parents, you should have something to get for yourself to find something new. But older teachers like to lead personally their own classroom.

T2: Other teachers will get shock facing the art class.

Teacher 2 claims that pupils can learn something new when they learn for personal motivations. This happens when pupils have a role in decision making about learning material, and it is more possible to happen in visual art classes because of the freedom and creativity that are of its requirements. By talking about the 'other teachers being shocked' she indicates on the difference that sharing the power for decision making, makes in visual art classes with other classes.

S4 : Where the kids are drawing or doing anything with visual art, they can do it with their own hands and think about how it is and why it is like that, and why the rabbit is white in winter, and they need to focus on.

Student 4 talks about using the hands and thinking about what pupil is doing. Indication here is on the practical aspect of work of visual arts that draw attention of the pupils to the objective issues. Objective things are in the area that young people are more skillful and interested in. They can more easily master them and feel that they have central role. In this process the focus is transferred to the area that pupils can play more determinant role.

#### **4.2.7 Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking concern the quality in pupil' mindset that make them sensitive about the reasons for their own decision makings and behaviors, as well as of the people around them and the events. Accordingly, the analysis through which this theme is derived are in some way related to drawing pupils' attention to reasons behind things.

The flexibility in arts for giving the freedom to choose different topics and work in different styles, makes it possible to have critical discussion and thinking. When everything has been previously decided by the authority of teachers, and students have to obey, it will not be possible to question own decision and action and think critically about them. While in arts, they learn that they are responsible, because they have freedom. It is very important part of people's personality that understand that they are responsible for their decisions, then they should think deeply and question their own decisions.

S1: The teacher can ask them why did you chose that tool, what would have happened if you chose different thing, and they discuss it... I think it is a good place to teach children

that they have freedom. Because they chose something, and they should think why. It is a very important skill in life.

Student 1 talks about 'asking pupils why' they decided some specific things. And by things she means tools for drawing or topic of drawing. She also hints on the freedom that they have in choosing them. This freedom is because of the flexibility of visual arts, and it is also this freedom that make it possible to think in next step that what has been the reason for this choice. If there was not this free choice there would not be chance to think about the reasons. And this is how visual art gives the best chance for practicing critical thinking.

T1: There you only learn to copy. Instead of trying to learn the way of thinking why this kind of mathematical form has been found.

Teacher 1 is discussing how integrating arts with math can be helpful in looking more critically about the rules and relations in math. She assert that learning math can be just copying what the teacher is doing, when pupils do not think deeply about the relations there and the reasons for them. The creativity of arts, for example by paintings and visualizing the mathematical relations, help pupils to see the reasons behind this relations.

#### **4.2.8 Credit for Diversity**

Credit for diversity is recognized as a theme of cognitive development because it refers to the understanding that pupil can have about the very diverse forms through with they and their peers can learn, understand the world around and express their understanding. By opening their point of view they learn that there are more differences in the world rather than wright and wrong.

S5: Spacious intelligence can be developed by art practices

By referring to the example of 'spacious intelligence', student 5 tries to justify that there are plural aspects in intelligence and using arts is related to their development. Spacious intelligence is specially the more related to practical activities compared to some other aspects, and will not develop by studying exclusively the subjects like science. Mentioning it by student 5 shows that he is connecting

intelligence to visual arts, because of the possibilities that they provide for different practical activities that are neglected in traditional educational perspectives.

T1: ...different styles during different time of history,...different cultures,...variation could be seen. [Then] they will see that they do not have to do the same thing.

Teacher 1 point on the diversities in the history of art and cultures. She means that there are many examples of diversity in visual artistic expressions, point of views, customs and habits. By using this example she reasons that by introducing this diversities within visual art classes, and encouraging pupils to explore and try them, they can acquire this insight that diversity is a reality in world. She says 'They do not have to do the same', they can try new things and do not limit their life to what have been used to so far.

S5: You start to discuss about a process, what has let you to this point, whether is about some art piece or whatever. And you discuss it and you get many perspectives and so on.

Student 5 talks about the discussion in visual art classes. And says that the process of getting to the result can be discussed. Because of the vast range of ways in visual art that each pupil can follow to get to specific result, there will be a lot to discuss about. The discussion during which each pupil might hear novel and surprising point of views, as he refer to 'many perspectives'. Facing this diversity through communication with peers, each pupil try to see from others' point of view and practice and master this skill.

### **4.3 Social Development in Relation with Visual Art Education**

According to the findings of this study, visual art education foster the social development of pupils through meaningful connection with the following themes. Sympathy and participation.

#### **4.3.1 Sympathy**

Concept of sympathy is used in this study referring to the ability of people in understand each other's feelings and potential to put self in the place of others. Therefore it is related to social development of pupils. Interviewees referred a lot

to emotions in relation with visual arts, and in some cases they furthered their talks to connecting pupils to each other by emotions. They mentioned a lot that visual art education can improve the deficiencies that there is in mainstream educational perspectives about emotions, communication and connection among pupils.

S5: Maybe art is the most natural place for learning about emotions. And maybe they are not your own emotions.

For student 5 it seems very 'natural' and obvious that as visual arts are connected to emotions, they are of the most suitable tools to 'learn about emotions'. And they are not necessarily 'your own emotion', but could be others. Learning about other people's emotion is the requirement for feeling sympathetically.

S2: So much interaction and emotions.

Student 2 bring the words 'interaction' and 'emotions' together. And claims that there are so much of them in visual art classes, because in visual arts emotions are important part and there is freedom to interact and share emotions.

T2: For me it [Art education] means wonderful contacts with students. In visual art education very intimate contact can appear between students and teacher, because they speak freely during doing it about their personal experiences, thoughts and emotions.

Teacher 2 has long time experience of teaching visual arts and faced many cases of sharing emotions by means of working visual art education. She use the words 'contact', 'intimate' 'personal thoughts and emotions', that all refers to facing with other's innate being. She remember and refer to the experiences through with pupils used visual arts to express the feelings or believes that would not be easy to express by other means. Being in a atmosphere of shared emotions and thoughts is a good chance for pupils to practice to understand each other and have sympathy.

#### **4.3.2 Participation**

By participation, this part of the study assess the meanings of visual art education on pupils participation in social activities. Learning activities are of the most

important jobs of pupils and if they are supposed to practice social participation, learning and other related activities in schools are best chances. Then, the learning material that can provide this possibility is a meaningful facilitator.

S1: I recently understood that visual art is not just for making beauty, but also for creating something that you think is wrong and for making a point in a very powerful way, for example in political art. It is good for children to learn that there is a way for them for changing the world. We can start from very basics for younger children, for example about what they do not like in school.

Student 1 claims that pupils can 'make a point' and 'change the world' by using the 'ways' that visual art education introduce to them. She hints on the expressive feature of the visual arts that makes them like a tool that pupils can use for visualizing their thoughts and make change and play a role. This social participation can start with expressing critical point of views in artistic way, and might continue later by using their artistic skills in challenging social problems. Observing examples of 'political art' is example of this possibility.

T2: [It is] not just making art and improving art skills, but also a way to speak more about much vast issues.

Teacher 2 believes that visual art education is not only about 'skills' and artistic skills. It is an expressive tool for 'speaking' about 'vast issues'. Vast issues include many things addition to artistic beauty, including personal and social things. By speaking about them through visual arts, pupils should have personal point of view, and take a side about it and express it in public. And this is a form of social participation.

#### **4.4 Summary**

The themes derived from data, that comprise the concept of emotional development have mutual qualities that all originate from the flexibility and openness of visual arts. These themes are not absolutely different, rather are interrelated and one act as the basis or support for another. Emotional development is result of this interrelation. For example, Freedom is a very basic feeling in relation with visual arts, because visual arts are not measurable neither rigidly structured. Then freedom acts as a basis for autonomy. One should first feel freedom to act

autonomously. The confidence resulted by autonomy give the courageous for self-expression, while the joy of freedom and sense of contribution by autonomous moves, makes the pupil to feel that is doing arts for own sake. And the benefits of all four themes empower the pupil.

There is same story about the themes that comprise cognitive development. Some themes are so close together and some very different. There are also some dependencies and cause and effect orders. For example creativity and imagination act as basis for knowledge construction, because it is in fact a process of creating with strong imagination. Experimental learning is other side of knowledge construction, because during construction knowledge the learner learn by doing. Learning based on pupils life provide materials for experimental learning. Role of pupil is important and centred when she/he is the constructor of knowledge and mastering skill of critical thinking is the reasonable result when the pupil is given the possibility to be creative, build own knowledge, learn about the real life and own environment, learn to give credit to diversity and have central role in learning process.

Themes related to social development are more limited in number. However, they are not less important, because, schools are also very important educational settings for practicing social skills, while, visual art education with the potential for connecting to many different issues and particularly, issues about human kind, provide powerful tools for pupils to develop this skills. Sympathy is about understanding other peoples and participation about acting in relation with other people.



## 5 DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Overview

The aim of this study was to explore the meanings of visual art education on emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils. The research question was answered through open ended interview, by different themes that were generated through analysis, forming in three different groups the three aspects of development of pupils including *emotional*, *cognitive* and *social development*.

This chapter includes discussion on the results of the study in comparison with the reference data.

Each section begins by mentioning the different themes that comprise the main development aspect, following by describing the meanings of visual art education on different aspects of pupils' development on the context of Finnish primary schools, with summary of reference data to support the related subject respectively.

### 5.2 Meanings of Art on Emotional Development

Based on findings, the experiences that can result in emotional development are freedom, autonomy, self - expression, sense of ownership and empowerment of pupils.

In educational settings that pupils are comparatively free from teachers' control, and in the atmosphere that interactions are mainly among pupils and their peers in less intense power relation, they feel far more comfortable. In such relations, they practice more strongly sense of connectedness and participate in school activities as if, they are kind of playing. (Devine, 2002). The mentioned features can be found in art classes or courses in which arts are integrated or influenced by art teaching approaches. As in art learning, the authoritative role of teacher could be more easily challenged, the distinction of right or wrong is not so clear because of the relative nature of the arts, and escaping from control can

be more easily justified. Pupils dare to express their opinion and not be scared of being wrong. This freedom of strict power structure of science learning in traditional methods in which the teacher is owner of knowledge and power, could be the first step for pupil to practice more agentively in schools. Because, they feel important, empowered and motivated to work.

In doing school projects or group art work, pupils see themselves as influential member of project in which everybody is producer. They use their highest motivations and abilities for progressing the project. They even try to make changes positively in the process and express their point of view about the subject and consider it as something important and useful. They feel that doing project is empowering them in learning about subjects and about themselves. (O'Neil & Barton, 2005). Pupils feel free to work more autonomously, free from strict control that make them to fit themselves in the structure of rules and cut the accept of themselves that might be considered unrelated, unacceptable or wrong. They are free to work on what they are themselves interested in and actualize what they want to be, instead of following what is dictated. They enjoy what they are doing and do for their own sake. They learn that what is in their naive mind is worth to get as true and work on.

Pupils' freedom in deciding about their learning, positively affects their self - concept and their attitudes about the learning material, as it improves their learning outcomes (King, 1983). The joy of freedom is much likely to be given to pupils in visual art lessons. And it can itself work as the supporter of autonomy, sense of ownership and self expression.

Uniqueness of artistic work, and the loneliness that each person has during individual way of creating self work of art, has a positive influence on reinforcing the autonomy of children. Through such experience, they learn that for completing their work, sometimes they have to do it in a way different with others, and it does not mean that they are doing it wrong. Then, they learn that in some cases they have to endure loneliness or difference with other people in the society, and stay loyal to their identity (Gude, 2009). They learn to trust their feelings and

intuition and just actualize what is in their mind, rather than copying work of others that does not necessarily make sense to them and result in the meaningful achievement. They learn to follow what they have inherent abilities and interests about. What they are made for doing.

### **5.3 Meanings of Art on Cognitive Development**

According to the results and theories, there are even more factors derived from visual art education that can be considered as useful for cognitive development. Critical thinking, knowledge construction, experimental learning, imagination, creativity, giving credits to diversity, pupil centred learning and teaching based on pupils life.

From the example of project based learning in schools, some qualities inspired from visual art education that have been applied in science learning, can be found. In such learning methods, role of teacher is only as a member of knowledge - building group. Teachers do not confine pupils' learning to what they already know well. Different members of the educational setting contribute in the process through different roles, based on their personal differences, not for getting to the same answers (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1991). The mentioned qualities emerged in project learning, give to each member of the group the role of the knowledge constructor, because they should explore personally and in cooperation with other for finding answers of their questions and discover them by themselves, rather to wait passively for the answer to be given by teacher. This is exactly the role that artists have in creating their art piece. Art piece is not possible to be created under the order of any teacher, it necessarily should be created.

To go back to Deleuze and Guattari, from whom the very basic thoughts of this research come, they describe thinking process, the way of growing that happens by mass of its alteration and there is not an end or restriction for it (?). By this model in fact, they depict about any complex non-hierarchical system (Alexander, 1988). To clarify more, our perceptions of the world are not exactly and exclusively perceived by the objects that origin from. Rather they are creatively

crafted by the thinkers like a work of art. Like all artistic elements that construct an art piece (Semetsky, 2003). By having these kinds of theories as the background perspective about thinking and learning about the world, educational perspectives in which the learner has the more central position and it is he/she that determine the reality of the learning matter get more validity. In the traditional perspectives the authority is given to the teacher and validity to what the teacher knows and claim about the absolutely write truth. It was because of having control on pupils mind and behavior and avoiding the chaos. While, Rhythmic learning is a chaos itself, and can not happen under the strict control that make pupils disconnected with their personal abilities in building knowledge.

The chaos and crafting knowledge is something that can be well practiced in art classes. It is there that pupils can face with the extra - ordinary (Allan, 2013), what that can impulse pupils to go for discovery, because world of arts with all freedom that provide and imagination that demands, is the best place for going after what really is extra - ordinary for any single pupil.

According to Drohan (2013), the meaning of teacher's signs need to be individually decoded by the learner, through experiencing. At first, with the immediate facing of pupil with the new sign sent by the teacher, it is an unknown, and pupil cannot put it in proper place in the known world of concepts. Then pupil should search freely in the world of concepts in own mind to find associations with previous experiences and memories to connect with the new sign and build its principles (Drohan, 2013), that means to understand it in relation with the already made system of concepts. An example of the sign transferred to mind of pupils in art class could be as following. By starting to look and speak about an art piece, pupils face something unfamiliar. In the process of making sense of it by speaking and connecting to what they already know, they make new understanding and meaning that is meaningful for them.

Another example about how this process can be applied by work of arts for building understanding would be as following. For little children drawing is way of thinking. It can be also helpful for expressing how they have understood things

and how they build their learning because it is a process of creation. Through drawing children can give meaning to the words by shapes that they themselves create and can individually connect to those meanings.

Rotry (2007), referring to the experimental learning theory of Dewey, discuss that pupils' consciousness on themselves and their environment, and their emotional and experiential growth should be an important part of the educational system. Are of the same importance, perceiving things in a very personal way by interactional embodiment, in a way that pupils' whole physical and mental entity is engaged (Rotry, 2007). The same idea is found in Allan (2013), when she hints on the quality of arts mentioned by Deleuze and Guattari, that includes demand for connection and embodiment with individuality of people who try to make different kinds of artworks. It is so obvious that artistic activities are from the best ways for developing consciousness of children on themselves and environment. By doing art about different subjects they make their personal understanding and interpretation of it and take it into their own world of awareness and emotions. They face with it with the most direct and way and get conscious about it emotionally and physically. While in a same time their general abilities for sensing, and getting conscious have developed. On the other hand, by doing free work of art by themselves, and not copying the teacher, pupils practically find the right way for doing things, and deeply understand that why they are doing it that way. Working with hands and getting involved with own body provide kind of familiarity and knowledge that is different with the knowledge that has gained only by hearing about something. It is more tangible and concrete and personally meaningful. It is deeper than the knowledge that is describable by language. It is the cognition that Eisner (1991), suggest that can be acquired by work of art. Ways for human cognition other than those that are possible to be expressed by language should be acknowledged. He exemplify the kinds of knowledge that are necessary for drawing a picture or creating a poem, as well as qualities like the way a view look or a special feelings of a voice, the qualities for understanding and expressing which there should be ability other than what

is possible to be described by any language Eisner (1991). It is the ability and skill that could be exclusively known and mastered by doing, and work of art provide the chance for this kind of cognition.

From one aspect, what discussed above is related to what Olsson (2009), put forward in her research, when she search for approaches and methods that promote the vitality of learning process and focus on capacities of children as *overabundant extravagant force* states in their process of becoming, that shift the attention on process, rather than result (Olsson, 2009). This emphasize on the learning process instead of the result is related to the importance that in Deleuze and Guattari's theory is on the process of knowledge construction by the pupil that they call Rhizomatic learning. In this process knowledge is recreated by the pupil in learning process, while the final result might be different with what the teacher expect, the main work has been done during attempt for making something that make sense for pupils themselves. It is during this process that pupils' becoming has been also well practiced. The same importance on process of doing and creating is in work of art. There is planning, starting, doing and decide to end it and announce the final result. It is a process. Pupils see their control over the process and taking order out of chaos. This process resemble the rhizomatic learning, in which there is no previously decided map or order to follow and the path is made by the one who is going through it.

About artistic experiences that can support learning, Eisner (1991), adds the idea that learning of abstract matters rely on the ability of learner in using imagination in relation with language. He explain that abstract concepts are understood and explained by using the imaginative nature of words. It is only possible by using the images that we can explain qualities related to these concepts. The more rich imagination resource that we have access to, the more deep understanding of abstract knowledge we can have. He conclude that artistic sensibility is one of the supporters of the semantic quality of language and the highly abstract and complicated concepts that it carries (Eisner, 1991). By feeding their imaginations by means of art, pupils expand the capacity of their mind for making

sense of reality in the form of abstract concepts. And by attempting to differentiate real from not real by means of their imagination, they further ability of their mind in building understanding of more complicated concepts related to more complicated appearance of reality that is put in higher level of language.

Acknowledging the diversity of the world and people is the other fact that pupils of current time need to know about in the schools. Rotry (2007), argues that as the complexity and plurality is nowadays an accepted aspect of human culture, this plurality can be properly found in the plurality of visuality of the real world of today and be used and reflected through visual art education practices (Rotry, 2007). Facing differences in artistic abilities in different pupils, as well as facing with very different artistic styles in describing one single phenomenon, pupils learn about the plurality of the people and their abilities and possibilities for doing things. By having freedom to experience different artistic works and trying different methods and tools, pupils even discover diversity and plurality in their inner world and learn about the vast possibilities that they have for knowing the world and expressing their thoughts, despite their limitations or disabilities. Eisner (1991), discuss the plurality regarding the aspect of cognition, and related to it the practical knowledge, that necessarily need to be acquired in different ways by different pupils, that can result in liberalization of approaches on quality of intellect and a new image of a smart person in a way that is broader and more humane (Eisner, 1991) . Considering the ways for cognition as multiple, makes the education more and in different ways connected to arts. Because it will not be any more exclusively the logical-mathematical intelligence that should develop in schools. Other aspects that could be developed by working different arts are also given importance. Accordingly, this perspective gives more important role to the art in education.

To discuss about the influence that art education has on the critical thinking of pupils, it is been claimed by researchers that, the inquiry - oriented learning in art studies made the art pupils to assess the subjects more critically compared to others. While, open - ended tasks in art education, helps pupils to think deeply

as they will need to compare and adapt different perspectives (Lampert, 2006a; King, 1994). On the other hand, safe and tolerant atmosphere that the practice of art create among pupils that lets the pupils to get very different signals from each other, lead them to understand that things can be different with what they have seen in the first glance (Lampert, 2013). The flexibility in arts for giving the freedom to choose different topics and work in different styles, makes it possible to have critical discussion and thinking. When everything has been previously decided by the authority of teachers, and pupils have to obey, it will not be possible to question own decision and action and think critically about them. While in arts, they learn that they are responsible, because they have freedom. It is very important part of people's personality that understand that they are responsible for their decisions, then they should think deeply and question their own decisions. The flexibility and openness that are nature of arts support and demand discussion, questioning, reasoning and seeing things from different point of view of other pupils have the same role in supporting critical thinking.

#### **5.4 Meanings of Art on Social Development**

Dewey's (1916), believe in pupils' participation and shared learning through free communication, and its essential influence on making a democratic society, can lead us to the basis that art education can provide for a democratic society.

Democratic principles can be taught by democratic methods of teaching, through the equal position of pupil and teacher in understanding and building knowledge. They learn to be patient towards other people when they face teacher's patience towards their own mistakes. Work of art, in which everybody is equally right, is the best practice for learning democracy. Shared learning can also happen in art classes. It is a practical activity that children can do together or look to and learn or inspire from each other. The important role of each child as the builder of learning give them this confidence to teach to each other. The classroom will have a democratic atmosphere in which everybody can teach and help others.



Artistic activities are potential for interaction among pupils, that demands them to have realistic estimation of their relations with each other and can result in development of their social capital (O'Neil & Barton, 2005). Art class is a proper place for interaction. There are different fun issues about their interests, tastes, abilities and plans that pupils can speak about them with each other. It is also a good tool for easing the interaction and understanding each other, because it can help to express ideas that other wise are too complicated to discuss. By means of it group activities can be done through which pupils can practice their social skills in more fun and relaxed atmosphere, where it is not about very sever benefits that they need to negotiate.

Through working arts, one of the most important qualities that is applied and improved is imagination. Beside different influences of imagination that are discussed before, there are some social influences as well. Sympathy is one of the features that could be developed by it. Due to the insight that imagination support to have about other people's feeling, thoughts and status, ability for sympathy is well encouraged (Nussbaum, 2010). And when work of art is connected to pupil's everyday life, what art can easily do, the imagination is directed to work about issues of other people around them.

Work of art in schools have been also recognized as a good vehicle for involving in the real world in which pupils live, with all complicated associations of it. By help of the open atmosphere of art classes, pupils can express their point of views about their world and learn about it from each other, relaxed and free from the anxiety that normally expressing point of views about social issues might bear (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005; Nussbaum, 2010). Work of art it self can act as a facilitator of knowing about personal emotions and thoughts. Accordingly it can help expressing them in social interactions with less stress and conflict. While, the intimate and immediate relation that arts provide for pupils with the world around them, and what they make artistically and expressed them self by it, can give them this feeling that what they believe is worthy to express

and by doing it, they can be a contributor in the world around them and not just an observer.

## 5.5 Ethical considerations

My main concern about ethical issues in implementing this study was the one that I had always had generally about content analysis method. And it is that how can I remain loyal to what the interviewees originally mean, while I put my own understanding of their words. Despite my eagerness for receiving answers consistent with what I had in mind, for finding ideas in analysing process in which I can find the factors that I had found previously in my reference materials, I could have not assign their words in confirming for my ideas, when they were not. For example if they did not give me any hint that work of art in schools could result in pupils empowerment, I could not show in any way that they had said so. I was also very careful to not put words in their mouth and attempt seriously to just ask open - ended and neutral questions.

Polit & Beck (2004), put forward this concern that if the results are too compressed the idea of interviewees must get lost (Polit & Beck 2004). Accordingly, I did not miss the hints leading to useful themes and attempted to gather them all under three final categories of developmental aspects, as long they were consistent.

I had to repeat the same question few times or in different shapes to encourage them to think about it again or differently, to reach to an answer. It looked like putting pressure on them for finding answer for the question that they did not know the very clear or certain answer for. While Patton (2001), believes that ability of the interviewer in getting the interviewees to say what they might regret later for not saying, and the good feeling of finding a meaningful answer for a profound question, is a reward that interviewees receive who faced with a though and insisting interviewer (Patton, 2001). Similarly, after insisting the interviewees to answer my questions, by repeating them, and when they found

some novel ideas that surprised them or remembered memories that in new situation were more meaningful for them, I saw the satisfaction sign in their faces.

The time that interviewees spent on taking part in the interview, is another ethical responsibility of mine. I had to convince number of Mario's students who took part in the experience in art course to spend time for interviewing with me, while they were busy with their studies. It was not an easy task to do, and I was ethically challenged to insist on them. Therefore, should I have compensated their spending time in a way? Now, I think that I could have think for at least a cup of coffee. While during that time, Being too concern with my questions I did not think about it at all. Although, Patton (2001), suggest that the compensation could be the role that the participants play for improving knowledge (Patton, 2001), I think that cup of coffee could be a sign of my appreciation for their attempt in answering my difficult questions.

## **5.6 Reliability and limitations**

While absence of statistics that are used in quantitative research, might make the qualitative research to look more vulnerable for mistakes, and to ensure reliability and objectivity in qualitative studies, Noble & Smith (2014), suggest that, it is necessary to be aware and careful about the personal biases that might influence the analysis and results. There is also need for accurate record and transcript of narrative data, clear test of interpretations, by means of accordance with reference data. Thick volume of word by word report of narrative data should be included in order to prove the credibility. Finally the researcher should remain clear in the sense of thinking in the process of data analyses (Noble & Smith (2014).

About the reliability of findings of this study, the concern about my personal interest on art and the necessity of its presence in schools and in pupils life, was always in my mind, warning me about the possible biased judgements, or directed interpretations of data. It is also clear that in searching for references, I have chosen materials that were confirming my early point of views about the

topic, rather than the ones that were contradicting. Nevertheless, I tried to avoid this as much as possible, by means of first, studying great number of articles about the topic in different aspects. This way, even if I have only chosen the confirming resources, there are good enough number of them to provide proof for supporting my later results in the more comprehensive way. I was also aware about my possible bias in processes of studying resources, interviewing and analyzing data, and tried to minimize the possible orientation. My transcripts are accurate and exactly in accordance with what interviewees said. There is also sheer volume of their words in the research text, that prove the credibility. And the main criteria of the reliability that is accordance of the results with reference data, is accurately done in the finding section. All different parts of the findings are claimed in accordance with studies and theories of other researchers or valid sheer volume of reference data philosophers. Finally, the whole methodology analyzing process is attempted to be explained honestly.

An important aspect of limitations of this study is that, based on the qualitative method of it, the findings are limited to the meanings of art education on development of pupils. The influence of this phenomena and all the measurable features are not possible to assess here.

To go into more details, it is noteworthy that the findings of this study are limited to the reference data and narrative data. Data gathered from the interviews are resourced by the point of views and experiences of the interviewees, limited by the level of their knowledge and studies on the issue, what they could remember at the moment of interview about their experiences and also limited by their age and experience of practice in the field. Obviously, the data is enriched and interpreted by means of reference data, in way of resulting in final findings, while the last point again limit the findings in the number of studies and diversity of point of views that they can provide. Some of the main ideas of these study like knowledge construction and experimental learning are supported by post-modernist perspectives which might be under serious criticism by other philosophical perspectives. The ideas about integration of arts with other subjects, are

in preliminary steps of presentation and examination in some schools around the world including Finland. The ideas provided by participants about them are supported not by a very long history of experience. While this fact also hints on the freshness of these fields and need for much more studies on them.

## 5.7 Themes for further research

To suggest for further studies in future, I go back to the introduction and concerns about political, social and economical problems that involve more or less many countries of the world. The question is that how the general educational policies of current world, in which art education is given the lowest priority, are related to the mentioned problems.

Atkinson (2017), discuss about the mainstream educational policies from the point of view of dominance of neoliberal discourse on education. The fact that makes it to involve frequent measures for pupils' works in school and make the pupils to direct their learning comprising and answering the educational measures. Deleuze (1995), also discuss that determinant role of assessments in educational systems is the new form of control that replaced the older ones in schools. He add that the final goal of this system is to serve the business- oriented objectives, that seems now, to be the true educational policy of every where (Hellman & Lind, 2017). Eisner (2008) claims that the pedagogical paradigm dominant in American schools during 20th century and so far have foundation in methodologies that are designed based on qualities and demands of physical sciences, excluding qualities of the other fields of knowledges and skills. This paradigm is more oriented by measurements rather than by meanings and its implications connect the education to business more than anything else.

Nussbaum (2010), open up other aspects of the issue in association with democracy and global justice, she discuss that due to the commercial motives in the background of more or less all general policies that lead different organizations

in different societies, and the expected profitability caused by them in educational systems, educational perspectives that advocate foundation and supporting democracy are under threat.

My suggestion is to put into consideration for further research, the associations of visual art education with the neoliberal policies and all of their tool for control and limit the diverse aspects of pupils development. Having particular attention on developing countries is necessary, because the complex of problems that they face with make the situation more complicated.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

The main concern of this research has been to discover how visual art education is meaningful in relation with different aspects of emotional, cognitive and social education of pupils.

Presence of visual art education in schools, whether separately as art courses or beside other subjects in integrating programs, contribute to the way pupils feel about themselves, the learning matters and schooling, as well as the way they construct their learning, produce their school products, ask questions, cooperate and help each other, master different skills and go through the trajectory of their growth and becoming.

Moreover, in exploring about meanings of visual art education on development of pupils, it was found that in traditional educational perspective, the concept of pupils' development is very narrowly defined. While, whether through studying reference data, or by analysing narrative data, very diverse aspects of development appeared, that in traditional perspectives of education are ignored. Qualities like, autonomy, critical thinking, sense of empowerment, sense of ownership over learning, sympathy and so on, are some examples. It is discovered in this research that visual art education improve the development of these ignored qualities, beside other aspects of emotional, cognitive and social development.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Consent Form for Teacher Training Students

This is to confirm that I agree to participate in a study carried out by Sahar Abdolmalekian, student in the Master's Degree Programme of Educational science, Department of Education, University of Jyväskylä. The study is supervised by Erja Kautto Knape. Ms. abdolmalekian has provided me with all the information that I have requested to make the voluntary decision to join her study. The Aim of the study is to explore the meanings of art education on the emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from the study at any point. I give permission for the interview data to be used in academic research and any other publications, and for the interview data to be archived for possible further research. The information may be presented as anonymously as possible without any identifying information. Confidentiality with regards to the received information binds the researcher in charge. I would like to receive a copy of the work when it is finished. yes  no

I have been teacher training student for \_\_\_\_\_ years

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the interviewee  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name of the interviewee

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the researcher  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name of the researcher

## Appendix 2. Consent Form for Primary School Visual Art Teachers

This is to confirm that I agree to participate in a study carried out by Sahar Abdolmalekian, student in the Master's Degree Programme of Educational science, Department of Education, University of Jyväskylä. The study is supervised by Erja Kautto Knape. Ms. abdolmalekian has provided me with all the information that I have requested to make the voluntary decision to join her study. The Aim of the study is to explore the meanings of art education on the emotional, cognitive and social development of pupils. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from the study at any point. I give permission for the interview data to be used in academic research and any other publications, and for the interview data to be archived for possible further research. The information may be presented as anonymously as possible without any identifying information. Confidentiality with regards to the received information binds the researcher in charge. I would like to receive a copy of the work when it is finished. yes  no

I have been primary School Visual art teacher for \_\_\_\_\_ years

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the interviewee

\_\_\_\_\_ Printed name of the interviewee

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the researcher

\_\_\_\_\_ Printed name of the researcher

## **Appendix 2 Interview Questions**

1. How does visual art education means to you?
2. How do you see the importance of visual art education within the whole body of education?
3. What do you think are the differences and similarities of visual art education with other subject teachings?
4. How do you think the benefits of visual art education can be transferred to other fields of education?
5. How could art education be integrated to other subjects?
6. How do you see the role of pupils in visual art teaching courses?
7. How pupils benefit from visual art education in your opinion?
8. Once again, how does visual art education means to you?